

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 02325 231801Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----002194 231808Z /50

O 231710Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE
SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6725
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAPETOWN PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 2325

EXDIS

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

LONDON FOR MOOSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGC: PDEV, RH, UK
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: NIGERIAN PERCEPTIONS

REF: (A) STATE 41681, (B&) LAGOS 2189, (C) LONDON 02979

SUMMARY: WE THINK MOOSE SHOULD COME TO LAGOS AFTER BRUSHING
OFF SOME OF THE LONDON FOG BY GOING BACK TO WASHINGTON FIRST.
END SUMMARY.

1. MEA AFRICA DEPARTMENT DEPUTY DIRECTOR FAFOWARA INFORMED
POLCOUNS TODAY THAT NIGERIA, CONVINCED THAT UK IS ABANDONING
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BRITISH-AMERICAN PLAN, IS APPROACHING FRONT-LINE STATES FOR SUPPORT
IN PRESENTING SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON RHODESIA IN MARCH
IN EFFORT TO BLOCK INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF INTERNAL SETTLEMENT.

2. FAFOWARA ALSO SAID NIGERIANS DOUBT U.S. INTENTIONS REGARDING
INTERNAL SOLUTION. HE SAID AMB JOLAOSO HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO
GET CLARIFICATION OF DEPARTMENT'S PRESS RELEASE (REFTEL A),

PARTICULARLY STATEMENT THAT 'UNTIL WE SEE A TEXT AND HAVE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONSIDER IT CAREFULLY, WE WILL HAVE NO FURTHER COMMENT.' HE SAID THE NIGERIANS DO NOT BELIEVE THE TEXT IS RELEVANT; WHAT IS RELEVANT IS FACT THAT PF IS NOT INVOLVED.

3. SPEAKING UNOFFICIALLY, FAFOWARA EXPRESSED OPINION THAT NKOMO, IF OFFERED THE PROPER INDUCEMENT, WOULD JOIN THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. WHEN ASKED WHAT THAT INDUCEMENT WOULD BE, HE REPLIED: FOR EXAMPLE, OFFICE OF PRIME MINISTER,' HE SAID THAT NKOMO WAS IN A GOOD BARGAINING POSITION: HE NOT ONLY HAD THE ARMED FORCES BUT HE COULD BRING INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION TO THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. WHEN ASKED 'WHAT ABOUT MUGABE', HE SAID THAT SO LONG AS NKOMO MADE THE LEAP, THE ARRANGEMENT SHOULD BE ACCEPTABLE INTERNATIONALLY.

4. COMMENT: IN CONTEXT OF FMG'S PRESENT DOUBTS CONCERNING U.S. INTENTIONS, WE WOULD LIKE TO REITERATE OUR OPINION EXPRESSED REFTEL B THAT VISIT BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE WOULD SERVE USEFUL PURPOSE AT THIS TIME. SUCH A VISIT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY TIMELY IF FAFOWARA'S 'UNOFFICIAL' ASSESSMENT OF NKOMO'S POSSIBLE ROLE IMPLIES FMG WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER THE MERITS OF SUCH A ROLE. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF UK'S PRESENT BACKTRACKING MOOSE MIGHT CONSIDER RETURNING FIRST TO WASHINGTON IN ORDER TO PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN US AND UK (OBASANJO RETURNS TO LAGOS FROM KWARA STATE LATE SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26 AND GARBA EXPECTED ABOUT SAME TIME FROM TRIOPLI). A VISIT BY MOOSE TO LAGOS MIGHT IN THESE
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CIRCUMSTANCES BE TACTICALLY ADVISABLE BEFORE RATHER THAN AFTER VISITS TO THE FRONTLINE STATES. MOOSE'S DECISION TO CONTINUE ON TO THE FRONTLINE STATES COULD PERHAPS BE DELAYED UNTIL HE GETS A READING FROM OBASANJO. BESIDES, SOME DUST MAY HAVE SETTLED BY THEN AND WE WILL KNOW MORE ABOUT THE PROFILE OF THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AND WHAT IT REALLY MEANS.
EASUM

NOTE BY OC/T: REFERENCE (A) APPEARS TO BE INCORRECT.

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